



OFFICE OF  
**INSPECTOR  
GENERAL**  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

# HIGHLIGHTS

December 9, 2013

## Relationship Between Business Connect and Post Office Performance

Report Number MS-MA-14-001

### **BACKGROUND:**

Postmasters can play a key role in growing the U.S. Postal Service's mail volume and revenue. The Postal Service's Business Connect<sup>®</sup> program was designed to engage postmasters, station managers, and branch managers in generating revenue and strengthening relationships with small business customers. Under Business Connect, postmasters are encouraged to contact local businesses each year via group meetings, lobby events, or face-to-face customer meetings. Postmasters reported about \$265 million in estimated annualized revenue through this program in fiscal year (FY) 2012 and about \$247 million in FY 2013.

In a June 2013 audit, the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General reported on small business growth and identified low- and high-performing postmasters in the Business Connect program. When asked about the variation in postmasters' performance, Postal Service officials asserted that operational challenges limited the time certain postmasters had available to conduct Business Connect activities. These challenges included responding to customer complaints and staff grievances, managing overtime hours and leave, and ensuring timely completion of carriers' routes.

This report analyzes in greater detail the assertion that time constraints imposed

by operational challenges affect postmasters' Business Connect performance. Our objective was to evaluate the relationship between Post Office performance and Business Connect performance.

To accomplish our objective, we collected and analyzed data comparing Post Office operational performance, such as the number of customer complaints, wait time in line, and employee grievances, to Business Connect performance metrics, including the number of Business Connect contacts and estimated generated revenue.

### **WHAT THE OIG FOUND:**

We found no relationship between Post Office operational performance and Business Connect performance for the variables we selected. Therefore, neither lower nor higher performance in these Post Office operational areas necessarily precludes postmasters from achieving success in their Business Connect activities.

### **WHAT THE OIG RECOMMENDED**

We did not make any recommendations in this report. Management agreed with this report and they are not required to comment on its contents since there were no recommendations.